

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## HEARING SET FOR GARY BMV OFFICE'S FUTURE

INDIANAPOLIS—State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary) said the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) has set the hearing date to determine the future of the Gary BMV branch office.

The hearing is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 17 at Tamarack Hall's Main Auditorium on the Indiana University Northwest Campus.

"The branch is critical for the citizens of Gary and they need to attend this hearing to let their voices be heard," said Dr. Smith. "Not only would the closure of this branch affect the ability of people to get their drivers licenses, but also it would affect their ability to obtain photo ID's that Hoosiers will be required to have in order to vote in the next election.

"African-Americans need to understand the importance of their participation in the political process," explained Dr. Smith. "Their votes make a tremendous difference in local, state and national elections. If we do not take the opportunity to exercise this right to vote, we will not have control of our own destinies. We put our lives and our children's futures in the hands of people who may not care about our community or who may even be hostile to us and the issues we face."

Dr. Smith reminded fellow African-Americans what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Even when the polls are open to all, Negroes have shown themselves too slow to exercise their voting privileges. There must be a concerted effort on the part of Negro leaders to arouse their people from the apathetic indifference...In the past, apathy was a moral failure. Today, it is a form of moral and political suicide."

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"Gary is Indiana's fifth largest city," Dr. Smith said. "Ninety percent of our city's population consists of minorities. Gov. Daniels and BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman need to acknowledge the importance of our community and the great significance this BMV office plays in the daily lives of our people. Gov. Daniels and Commissioner Silverman need to hear these concerns from the people who live here and I encourage as many people as possible to attend this critically important hearing."

Dr. Smith also urged Gary citizens to call and write both Gov. Daniels and Commissioner Silverman. He said the letters need not be long, but should express the hardship that closing the Gary BMV branch would cause area residents.

Gov. Daniels' office telephone number is 317-232-4567. Commissioner Silverman's office number is 317-233-2349. One also can call the General Assembly's toll-free number – 1-800-382-9842 – and ask to be transferred to either Gov. Daniels' office or Commissioner Silverman's office.

The governor's address is:

Governor Mitch Daniels  
Governor's Office-Room 206  
Statehouse  
200 West Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204.

The commissioner's address is:

Commissioner Joel L. Silverman  
Bureau of Motor Vehicles-Room N440  
Indiana Government Center North  
100 North Senate Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204.